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The Effects of Parenting Programs for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers

Many fathers who participate in federally-funded responsible fatherhood (RF) programs have been or are currently involved in the criminal justice system. Recent data from four RF programs indicated that about three-quarters of fathers in these programs had been convicted of a crime at some point in their lives (Zaveri et al. 2015). Moreover, some RF programs work with fathers while they are still incarcerated or shortly after release (Fontaine et al. 2017).

Fathers who have been involved in the criminal justice system face many challenges to maintaining strong relationships with their children. Challenges during incarceration can include the distance families must travel to visit fathers, shame surrounding supervised visits, and the prohibitive cost of phone calls in prisons (Poehlmann et al. 2010). After release, strained relationships with their children's mothers and other family members can also prevent fathers from reconnecting with their children (Tyner 2015). These types of challenges

might make it harder for RF programs to improve the parenting outcomes of justice-involved fathers, which is one the primary goals of RF programs (Administration for Children and Families [ACF] 2020).

To help RF programs better serve fathers with criminal justice involvement, this brief summarizes research on the effects of parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers. Recognizing the barriers that fathers face to effective parenting during and after incarceration, a large and growing number of correctional facilities and community organizations offer parenting services for fathers while they are in prison or jail or shortly after release (Armstrong et al. 2018; Hoffman et al. 2010). We identified and reviewed rigorous research on these programs to distill key lessons for the RF field. Many of these programs focus solely or primarily on parenting, in contrast to federally funded RF programs, which must also



About the FRAMING Research project

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offer economic stability services, as well as services to promote or sustain healthy marriage and relationships (ACF 2020). Even so, research on these programs might be useful to RF program practitioners, policymakers, and researchers looking for ways to better support the parenting outcomes of fathers with criminal justice involvement.

We begin by describing parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers, including the populations they serve and the types of services they offer. We then summarize the research we identified and highlight what is known about the effectiveness of the programs included in our review. To summarize the research, we use an evidence and gaps map, which is a visual depiction of the evidence on a given topic, the strength of that evidence, and gaps in the knowledge base (Campbell Collaboration 2020). Finally, we discuss how the RF field can use this evidence to strengthen parenting services for justice-involved fathers.

OVERVIEW OF PARENTING PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED AND REENTERING FATHERS

More than half of correctional facilities for males in the United States offer some form of parenting services for their inmates, and the prevalence of these services is growing (Armstrong et al. 2018; Hoffman et al. 2010). Some programs work with fathers only while they are in prison or jail; others continue to work with fathers in the community after they are released or start working with fathers after release (Bednarowski 2019; Hairston 2007; Lindquist et al. 2016; Scott et al. 2017). Programs for fathers with criminal justice involvement often serve fathers with children of varying ages, from very young children to teenagers (Miller et al. 2013). In addition, fathers who participate in these programs often vary in their level of involvement with their children depending on institutional factors (such as prison or jail rules on visitation), whether they live near their children, and the quality of their relationship with their children and their children's primary caregiver (Dallaire and Kaufman 2018; Poehlmann et al. 2010).

Understanding the difference between jail and prison

In this brief, we use the term "incarceration" to refer to confinement within a jail or prison. Jails serve a local geographic area, and people are typically held in jails for a relatively short period of time. In contrast, prisons are typically run by state or federal governments and often involve longer periods of incarceration (Dallaire and Kaufman 2018). Prisons are more likely to be in remote areas far from where the families of incarcerated individuals reside. Therefore, parenting programs located in prisons may have more limited ability to involve family members in service than programs offered in jails (Dallaire and Kaufman 2018).

Parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers aim to improve parenting skills and knowledge so fathers can better care for their children after release (Armstrong et al. 2018; Hoffman et al. 2010). But recognizing that parenting is influenced by other factors, some programs aim to support other aspects of fathers' lives. For example, some programs strive to support fathers' relationship with their children's mother or other coparents (Butler et al. 2019; Lindquist et al. 2016); improve fathers' economic stability (Fontaine et al. 2017); or address other aspects of fathers' personal well-being, such as substance use issues or recidivism (Pierce 2015; Bednarowski 2019).

To achieve these objectives, parenting programs offer a variety of services. These services can include enhanced opportunities for parent-child visitation, case management, peer support groups, and parent education—with parent education being the most common (Bednarowski 2019; Hairston 2007). Parent education usually takes the form of one or two facilitators delivering a curriculum to a group of fathers. Curriculum content can vary across programs but often covers topics like child development, problem-solving, effective discipline techniques, communication, coparenting, stress, and managing emotions. Some curricula also address other issues that can influence parenting, such as employment, self-esteem, mental health, and substance use (Bednarowski 2019).

Program spotlight: InsideOut Dad

The InsideOut Dad program, which is implemented in residential correctional facilities, consists of a 12-session curriculum (Brown et al. 2018). The 12 sessions are titled (1) Getting Started, (2) About Me, (3) Being a Man, (4) Spirituality, (5) Handling and Expressing Emotions, (6) Relationships, (7) Fathering, (8) Parenting, (9) Discipline, (10) Child Development, (11) Fathering From the Inside, and (12) Ending the Program. Facilitators lead group sessions to address curriculum content and provide opportunities for fathers to discuss the material and their personal experiences. Fathers also receive handbooks to reinforce the curriculum. The handbooks contain open-ended questions fathers can respond to and instructional materials about children's growth and development.

Between group sessions, programs might ask fathers to apply the skills learned in class during visits with their child or through letters or phone calls with their child. In addition to parent education, programs might offer support groups to encourage fathers to interact with each other and foster peer-to-peer learning. Some programs might also assign fathers a coach or case manager to meet with them one-on-one to address personal issues or offer referrals to other services in the community (Bednarowski 2019; Fontaine et al. 2017). The length of services can vary considerably, with some programs consisting of a one- or two-day workshop and others serving fathers for several months.

Most parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers do not include other family members in services. However, some programs invite children, coparents, or both to participate alongside fathers. For example, programs might offer workshops for fathers and coparents about challenges associated with coparenting when one partner is incarcerated (Lindquist et al. 2016). In addition, facilitators might observe or provide feedback on fathers' visits with their children to help fathers apply the skills they have learned in the program (Landreth and Lobaugh 1998).

RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTING PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED AND REENTERING FATHERS

To summarize the impact literature on parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers, we reviewed rigorous studies that measured program effects relative to a comparison group that was generated through a randomized controlled trial or was matched to the treatment group using a quasi-experimental design. To identify studies, we drew on two meta-analyses on the effectiveness of parenting interventions for incarcerated parents (Troy et al. 2018; Armstrong et al. 2018) and an evaluation of Responsible Fatherhood, Marriage, and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers and Their Partners (Lindquist et al. 2016). Because these sources only reflect research published through 2016, we also used search criteria developed by Armstrong et al. (2018) to identify studies published since 2016. Using these sources and search criteria, we identified 10 impact studies of parenting programs for incarcerated or reentering fathers. More details about our literature search and the 10 studies we reviewed are available in the appendix.

Features of parenting programs included in our review

The studies we reviewed focused on programs that varied in terms of their setting, whether they invited other family members to participate, and the types and length of services offered. Seven of the programs included in our review served fathers while they were in prison or jail; three programs served fathers in the community shortly after they had been released or started serving fathers while they were incarcerated and continued to work with them after they were released. Four programs worked with children and/or coparents in addition to fathers. For instance, the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10–14 (Scott et al. 2017) required that fathers bring a focal child between ages 10 and 14 to the program with them. Fathers in this program were also encouraged to bring another adult who shared coparenting responsibility for the focal child, such as the child's mother or the father's current romantic partner. All programs delivered services to fathers in group sessions; one of the programs also included incarcerated mothers in these sessions. Two programs

also offered fathers individualized supports from a case manager or coach. Program duration varied considerably, ranging from five weeks (Smith and Morote 2011) to more than a year (Lindquist et al. 2016).

Programs also varied in terms of the topics they covered. All of the programs addressed topics related to parenting, including fathers' attitudes and beliefs about parenting from prison or after release, how to communicate effectively with children of different ages, dealing with frustration and setbacks in father-child relationships, and information on child development and discipline. In addition to parenting, eight of the programs addressed skills related to forming and maintaining healthy relationships with coparents or romantic partners, such as how to maintain a high-quality coparenting relationship or how to reduce instances of relationship aggression and violence. Nine of the programs also addressed topics related to fathers' personal well-being. These included avoiding the triggers related to reentry, like substance abuse or criminal activity. Only one program (Lindquist et al. 2016) addressed topics related to fathers' economic stability, including employment and managing finances.

Characteristics of studies included in our review

The studies we reviewed examined programs' effectiveness on a variety of outcomes. We categorized these outcomes into the following eight domains:

- **Relationship quality with child**, including fathers' closeness with their children, warmth and affection toward their children, and fathers' or children's reports of the quality of the father-child relationship.
- **Contact with child**, such as whether fathers lived with their child and the frequency of fathers' interactions with their child (including phone calls, mail, and visits).
- **Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge**, including fathers' attitudes toward child-rearing, confidence in their parenting skills, nurturing behaviors, discipline, and parental understanding of child development.
- **Financial support of child**, such as whether fathers have a child support order, whether they paid child support, and whether they provided other financial or in-kind support to their child.
- **Economic stability**, such as fathers' employment status and financial literacy.
- **Personal well-being**, including fathers' substance use, stress, depression, and recidivism.
- **Relationship quality with coparent**, such as the quality of fathers' coparenting relationship with their child's mother or another caregiver, relationship status, happiness in their current romantic relationship, and healthy relationship beliefs and behaviors.
- **Child well-being**, including child's behavior problems, self-regulation, and academic achievement.

All the studies we reviewed collected outcome data from fathers. Four of the studies also surveyed children or a co-parent to better assess how the program might have impacted their outcomes or their relationship with fathers.

The literature also had some limitations. Overall, the studies had small samples and short follow-up periods. Six of the studies we reviewed had fewer than 150 participants and the largest had 413 participants. Small sample sizes mean that the studies might only be able to detect very large effects, even when smaller effects exist. Most of the studies measured program outcomes immediately after the end of the program when fathers were still incarcerated. None of the studies had follow-up periods longer than nine months after the end of the program, which means we do not know the longer-term impacts of programming on fathers.

Overview of evidence and gaps map

To summarize the literature on the effectiveness of parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers, we developed an evidence and gaps map (Figure 1). An evidence and gaps map is a grid that presents an at-a-glance summary of what is and is not known about the evidence on a given topic (Campbell Collaborative 2020). Our map summarizes the evidence from the 10 studies we reviewed on the effectiveness of parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers and how effectiveness varies across program features. The rows list the outcomes that programs addressed. The columns list features of programs that could influence these outcomes. These features include the setting in which services were delivered (prison or jail, the community, or both); whether children or other coparents participated alongside fathers in services; the types of services delivered (group sessions or a combination of group sessions and individual services); whether the program was shorter or longer than the median of 10 weeks; and any topics covered in the curriculum in addition to parenting (healthy relationships with other coparents; economic stability; and personal well-being, such as substance use, mental health, and recidivism).

The cells of the map indicate whether studies of programs with a given feature examined outcomes in a given domain. The cells in the final column indicate all studies that examined outcomes in a domain. The cells contain three different icons. The solid green circles denote studies that found a favorable impact on an outcome (that is, a positive impact that was statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level). The open gray circles denote studies that found no impact on an outcome. The red circles with a line through them denote studies that found an unfavorable impact on an outcome (that is, a negative impact that was statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level). As an example, if a cell includes a green circle, this means that at least one study of a program with a particular feature found a favorable impact on an outcome within a particular domain. The size of the icons denotes the number of studies that found a favorable, null, or unfavorable impact. Larger icons denote a greater number of studies. [Table A.4](#) in the appendix lists the study or studies that belong in each cell.

Figure 1: Evidence and gaps map



Note: The size of the circles corresponds to the number of studies that found a particular impact (favorable/null/unfavorable) on a particular outcome domain. Table A.5 in the appendix includes the count of studies in each category.

* One study (Smith 2008) did not specify the length of the program.

Key findings from the evidence and gaps map

In this section, we highlight five key findings from the evidence and gaps map on the impact of parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers. Before we review our findings, it is worth noting that in each outcome domain, studies found a mix of favorable impacts, no impacts, and, occasionally, unfavorable impacts. In fact, there were several instances in which the same study found a mix of impacts on outcomes within the same domain. Many of the studies we reviewed examined multiple outcomes within a domain, and sometimes assessed outcomes at multiple follow-up periods or using data from different reporters. Despite these sometimes disparate findings, several patterns emerged that might be valuable to RF programs that serve fathers with criminal justice involvement.

Programs were most successful at improving fathers' contact with their child and parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge. Five of the studies we reviewed found favorable impacts on outcomes related to fathers' contact with their child—such as the frequency of phone calls and interactions with their child (Block et al. 2014; Eddy et al. 2013; Scott et al. 2017; Skarupski 2005; Smith and Morote 2011). In addition, five studies found favorable impacts on outcomes related to fathers' parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge such as confidence with parenting and knowledge of child development and effective discipline techniques (Block et al. 2014; Harrison 1997; Landreth and Lobaugh 1998; Smith 2008; Smith and Morote 2011). Of the 10 studies we reviewed, 8 found favorable impacts in at least one of these domains (Block et al. 2014; Eddy et al. 2013; Harrison 1997; Landreth and Lobaugh 1998; Scott et al. 2017; Skarupski 2005; Smith 2008; Smith and Morote 2011). All but one of the studies that found favorable impacts in these parenting domains focused on programs that served fathers in prison or jail rather than in the community (Scott et al. 2017). Although this is largely driven by the fact that most of the studies we reviewed served fathers in prison or jail, this pattern suggests that programs operating in this setting can be effective for improving certain aspects of fathers' parenting. Likewise, all but one of the studies that found favorable impacts in these domains delivered services solely through group sessions, rather than working with fathers individually (Eddy et al. 2013). In addition, five of the studies that found favorable impacts focused on programs that only served fathers rather than inviting children or other coparents to participate in services (Block et al. 2014; Harrison 1997; Skarupski 2005; Smith 2008; Smith and Morote 2011). This suggests that including other participants might not be necessary to generate favorable impacts in these parenting domains.

We know less about impacts on fathers' relationship quality with their child and impacts on child well-being, outcomes that are central to the goals of parenting programs. A key focus of parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers is to improve fathers' relationship with their children and, ultimately, enhance child well-being (Armstrong et al. 2018; Hoffman et al. 2010). Even so, only four of the studies we reviewed examined impacts on fathers' relationship quality with their child (Landreth and Lobaugh 1998; Lindquist et al. 2016; Scott et al. 2017; Smith 2008), and only three examined impacts on child well-being (Harrison 1997; Landreth and Lobaugh 1998; Scott et al. 2017). For many reasons, it might have been difficult for studies to collect data on child well-being. Appropriate measures of child well-being often depend on the age of the child, and nonresident fathers might not have enough contact with their child to report on child well-being. It is less clear, however, why so few of the studies we reviewed chose to measure fathers' relationship quality with their child. Among the studies that examined outcomes in these domains, only one found favorable impacts (Landreth and Lobaugh 1998). Specifically, this study found a favorable impact on fathers' acceptance of their child (for example, fathers' feelings of unconditional love for their child) and on problematic child behaviors (for example, whether the child destroys property of others). This study was one of the few that had children attend some program activities. Although more research in this area is needed, this suggests that inviting children to participate in services with their fathers might improve father-child relationship quality and child well-being.

Few studies examined impacts on fathers' economic stability or financial support of their child.

Only three studies examined outcomes related to fathers' economic stability or financial support of their child (Lindquist et al. 2016; Scott et al. 2017; Smith and Morote 2011), and only one found favorable impacts in these domains (Scott et al. 2017). This study examined the effectiveness of a community-based parenting program delivered to fathers shortly after they were released from prison. Only fathers in the intervention group received the parenting program, whereas fathers in both the intervention and comparison groups received basic reentry services, including employment services. Even though fathers in the intervention and comparison groups received employment services, the study found that fathers in the intervention group were more likely than fathers in the comparison group to be employed and to pay child support when the program ended. Only one of the studies we reviewed examined a program that offered employment and economic stability services to fathers in the intervention group but not to fathers in the comparison group (Lindquist et al. 2016). This study did not find impacts on fathers' economic stability or financial support of their child. Although improving fathers' economic stability and employment is a key focus of federally-funded RF programs, because our review focused on parenting programs, and many of the programs we identified served fathers in prison or jail, it is perhaps not surprising that most of the studies we reviewed did not examine these outcomes.

Although several studies examined outcomes related to fathers' personal well-being and relationship quality with a coparent, most found no impacts in these domains.

Five of the studies included in our review examined outcomes related to fathers' personal well-being, such as recidivism or substance use (Eddy et al. 2013; Harrison 1997; Lindquist et al. 2016; Scott et al. 2017; Shamblen et al. 2017). Likewise, five studies examined outcomes related to fathers' relationship with a coparent (Eddy et al. 2013; Lindquist et al. 2016; Scott et al. 2017; Shamblen et al. 2017; Smith 2008). However, few studies found significant impacts on fathers' outcomes in these domains. This lack of impacts is especially notable given that most of the programs addressed topics related to fathers' personal well-being and healthy relationships. These findings suggest that it may be difficult to improve these outcomes using the model adopted by most of the programs we reviewed—group sessions offered to fathers in prison or jail. Indeed, the two studies that found favorable impacts on fathers' personal well-being assessed programs that worked with fathers one-on-one to address their individual needs (Eddy et al. 2013; Lindquist et al. 2016). Similarly, the two studies that found favorable impacts on fathers' relationship with a coparent assessed programs that worked with fathers in the community after they had been released, when fathers could more easily apply the relationship skills learned in the program (Lindquist et al. 2016; Shamblen et al. 2017). It is possible that these additional program components might help enhance fathers' outcomes in these two domains.

There is limited evidence on programs offered in a community setting, programs that include children or coparents in services, or programs that offer individual services.

As noted previously, the programs that we reviewed shared many features. Most served fathers in prison or jail, did not include children or coparents in services, and delivered services solely through group sessions. As a result, this body of literature provides limited evidence on the effects of working with fathers after they reenter the community, including children or coparents in services, or working individually with fathers (in addition to group sessions). The limited evidence we do have suggests that the favorable impacts of programming on fathers' parenting likely still hold for programs with these features (Eddy et al. 2013; Landreth and Lobaugh 1998; Scott et al. 2017). In addition, some of these features might enhance programs' effects on certain outcomes. For example, working with fathers individually might boost programs' effects on fathers' personal well-being. However, overall, there is not enough evidence on programs with these features to determine how these features affect fathers' outcomes.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RF PROGRAMS

Improving parenting outcomes for fathers with criminal justice involvement can be a challenge for federally-funded RF programs. To help RF programs better serve these fathers, this brief summarizes the literature on parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers. We identified and reviewed 10 impact studies of parenting programs for this population. Most of these studies focused on programs offered to fathers in prison or jail. As a result, the findings might be most applicable to RF programs that serve fathers while they are incarcerated. Even so, there are also important implications for RF programs that serve fathers in the community.

For RF programs that serve fathers in prison, the literature suggests that parenting education offered in group sessions can be effective for improving some parenting outcomes. These outcomes include those related to fathers' contact with their child and their parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge. Most of the programs we reviewed did not offer individualized services to fathers, such as one-on-one meetings with a case manager, suggesting that these additional services might not be necessary to generate favorable impacts in these areas. Likewise, most of the programs did not include children or coparents in programming, which can be logistically challenging, particularly for programs operating within prisons. There is less evidence on whether group sessions for fathers in prison or jail have similar effects on other parenting outcomes, including those related to father-child relationship quality and child well-being, because few studies examined outcomes in these domains.

For RF programs that continue to serve these fathers once they reenter the community, the evidence is less clear. Only three of the programs we identified served fathers after they were released from prison or jail. Even so, the favorable impacts identified for programs that served fathers in prison or jail might also apply to programs that serve fathers in the community (indeed, research on parenting programs for a general population of fathers, including RF programs, have found that delivering services to fathers in group workshops or classes can generate modest, positive effects on fathers' parenting [Avellar et al. 2018; Patnaik and Avellar 2020]). However, fathers might face additional challenges during and after reentry that can affect their parenting (Eddy and Burraston 2018; Charles et al. 2019). Also, it might be harder to get fathers to regularly attend community-based programs compared with programs offered in prison or jail because of other demands on fathers' time after they are released (Tully et al. 2017). If programs have low attendance, their effectiveness may be diminished.

In addition to parenting, RF programs aim to improve fathers' outcomes in other areas, including healthy relationships with coparents, economic stability, and, sometimes, other aspects of fathers' well-being. The studies we reviewed addressed these outcomes to varying degrees. Although many studies examined fathers' relationship quality with coparents and personal well-being, there were very few significant impacts on these outcomes. The lack of impacts is noteworthy because many of the programs addressed healthy relationships and fathers' personal well-being in group sessions. Very few of the studies we reviewed addressed fathers' economic stability, perhaps in part because most of the programs served fathers while they were still incarcerated. Overall, the studies we reviewed do not offer as much insight into how to improve fathers' outcomes in these other areas. Even so, this literature contains valuable lessons for RF practitioners, policymakers, and researchers interested in better supporting the parenting of fathers with criminal justice involvement.

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* Denotes studies that were included in our review of the impact literature on parenting programs for incarcerated and re-entering fathers.


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APPENDIX

To identify impact studies of parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers to include in the evidence and gaps map, we started with three sources (Table A.1). First, we reviewed two meta-analyses on the effectiveness of parenting interventions for incarcerated parents (Troy et al. 2018; Armstrong et al. 2018). These meta-analyses yielded seven studies that were eligible for inclusion in the evidence and gaps map. To be eligible, studies had to examine the impacts of a parenting program serving incarcerated or reentering men in the United States using either a randomized controlled trial or quasi-experimental design. In addition to the studies identified in the meta-analyses, we reviewed findings from a multisite national evaluation of Responsible Fatherhood, Marriage, and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers and their Partners (Lindquist et al. 2016). This evaluation included one site that tested the impacts of a parenting intervention for incarcerated and reentering fathers and was thus eligible for inclusion in our review.

Table A.1. Sources and screening results for impact studies

Source	Source type	Eligible impact studies
Troy et al. 2018	Meta-analysis	4 studies ^a
Armstrong et al. 2018	Meta-analysis	7 studies ^a
Evaluation of Responsible Fatherhood, Marriage, and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers and Their Partners	Evaluation	1 study

^a All the eligible studies identified in Troy et al. (2018) were also identified in Armstrong et al. (2018). In total, these two meta-analyses yielded 7 eligible studies.

Because these studies only reflect research published through 2016, we adapted the search criteria developed by Armstrong et al. (2018) to identify additional research on parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers published from 2016 to 2020. The parameters used for the search, as well as the screening criteria, are available in Table A.2. The search yielded 45 results. Of these, we found two studies that were eligible for inclusion in our review.

Table A.2. Literature search and screening parameters

Databases searched	Academic Search Premier, APA PsycInfo, Campbell Collaboration, CINAHL, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, Education Research Complete, E-Journals, ERIC, MEDLINE, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, ProQuest Dissertations, SAGE Journals, SocINDEX, Scopus
Date range	2016 to 2020

Table A.2. Literature search and screening parameters

Search terms		
Population (title or abstract)	Father* Dad Daddy Male Men	
Setting (title or abstract)	Correction* Detention* Jail* Inmate* Offender* Parole*	Prison* Probation* Incarcerat* Recent* release* Justice-involved
Intervention (title or abstract)	Father attachment Child-parent training Famil* counseling Famil* education Famil* intervention Famil* program* Famil* therapy Famil* training Famil* treatment Home intervention*	Home program* Home visit* Parent* course Parent* class* Parent* counseling Parent* education Parent* intervention Parent* program* Parent* therapy Parent* training Parent* treatment
Intervention (subject)	Childrearing practices Family intervention Family therapy Father child relations Father child communication Home visiting programs	Parent child communication Parent child relations Parenting training Parental involvement Parenting skills Parenting style
Impact evaluation (title or abstract)	AB design ABAB design Alternating treatment ANCOVA ANOVA Baseline Causa* Causal comparative Chi square Comparison condition Comparison group Control condition Control group* Covariat* Cross section Dependent variable Experiment Hypothes* Independent variable Control variable MANCOVA	MANOVA Matched group Meta analy* Metaanaly* No treatment group Odds-ratio Outcome variable Posttest* Post test* Pretest* Pre test* Propensity score* Quantitative Quasi exper* Random* RCT* Regression discontinuity Risk ratio* Systematic review T test* Variance

Table A.3 summarizes the 10 studies included in our review. It presents a description of each program, an overview of the study design, and details on the outcomes measures that each study assessed. Note that the sample sizes in the table refer to the total number of participants in the study (both in the program and the comparison groups). Table A.4 indicates the citations for the studies in each category that find a favorable impact, no impact, or an unfavorable impact. Table A.5 indicates the number of studies in each category that find a favorable impact, no impact, or an unfavorable impact.

Table A.3. Impact studies of programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers

Intervention or evaluation name (citation)	Program description	Study design	Outcome measures ^a
<p>InsideOut Dad (Block et al. 2014)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at improving fathers' attitudes and beliefs about parenting to ultimately enhance father-child relationships. Lessons focused on reducing antisocial attitudes, creating lasting family relationships, improving empathy and impulse control, discipline, and child development. Participants included incarcerated fathers. Programming was delivered in prison. Fathers attended two sessions per week for six weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QED Follow-up survey(s): Program exit Sample size: 413 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with child: Frequency of calling, writing, visiting with child Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Parenting confidence, parenting self-efficacy, parenting attitudes, curriculum knowledge assessment
<p>Parenting Inside Out (Eddy et al. 2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at improving incarcerated parents' role in their children's lives and preventing the development of antisocial behavior and other problem behaviors in children. Lessons were based on Parent Management Training and covered interacting with children, managing children's behavior, child development, parenting from prison, cooperating with child's caregiver(s), and healthy romantic relationships. Participants included incarcerated mothers and fathers with minor children (ages 3–11) and fewer than nine months remaining in their prison sentence. Programming was delivered in prison. Parents attended 2.5-hour sessions three times per week for 12 weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCT Follow-up surveys(s): Program exit Sample size: 359 parents (161 fathers and 198 mothers impacts were reported for mothers and fathers combined) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with child: Positive interactions with child (for example, "after contact, child was happy") Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Likelihood of playing an active role in child's life after release Personal well-being: Stress, depression Relationship quality with coparent: Closeness to coparent, ease of relationship with coparent
<p>Parent training classes (Harrison 1997)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at enhancing incarcerated fathers' parenting attitudes and abilities, as well as children's perceptions of themselves. Lessons covered children's developmental stages, behavior management (both self-management and how to manage children's behavior), effective listening, parent-child communication, and stepparenting. Participants included incarcerated fathers with children ages 8–17 years. Programming was delivered in prison. Fathers attended 2.5-hour sessions three times per week for six weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCT Follow-up surveys(s): Program exit Sample size: 30 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Fathers' attitudes toward child-rearing Personal well-being: Self-esteem Child well-being: Child's self-perceptions (child reported)
<p>Filial Therapy (Landreth and Lobaugh 1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at enhancing parent-child interactions and the parent-child relationship. Lessons covered child-centered play therapy principles to use with children in special weekly sessions that involved the father and child. Fathers also practice skills through role-playing. Participants included incarcerated fathers and a focal child between ages 3 and 7. Programming was delivered in prison. Fathers attended 1.5-hour sessions once per week for 10 weeks, as well as weekly 30-minute play sessions with their child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QED Follow-up surveys(s): Program exit Sample size: 32 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship quality with child: Parental acceptance of child Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Parental stress (for example, "When I think about what kind of parent I am, I often feel guilty or bad about myself.") Child well-being: Child problem behaviors

Table A.3. Impact studies of programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers

Intervention or evaluation name (citation)	Program description	Study design	Outcome measures ^a
<p>Multi-Site Family Study on Incarceration, Parenting, and Partnering New Jersey site (Lindquist et al. 2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of group programming and individualized supports aimed at fostering healthy relationships, strengthening families, and easing community reentry. • Lessons covered relationship and parenting education, domestic violence education, substance use treatment, and reentry. • Participants included incarcerated fathers within six to nine months of release, and their partners. To be eligible, fathers must have had a chemical dependency issue and be in a committed romantic or co-parenting relationship. • Programming was delivered to fathers and their partners in prison for six to nine months pre-release and in the community for six months post-release. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QED • Follow-up surveys(s): Program exit • Sample size: 309 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship quality with child: Parent–child relationship quality, parental warmth, self-rating as a parent • Contact with child: Co-residence with children, frequency of interactions, frequency of visits, phone calls, mail • Financial support of child: Any financial support to children • Economic stability: Employment • Personal well-being: Drug use, recidivism • Relationship quality with coparent: Relationship status, living with partner, communication skills, healthy relationship beliefs, conflict resolution skills, happiness with relationship, fidelity, intimate partner violence, coparenting

Table A.3. Impact studies of programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers

Intervention or evaluation name (citation)	Program description	Study design	Outcome measures ^a
<p>Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10–14 (Scott et al. 2017)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at promoting positive relationships, behaviors, and skills among families with children ages 10–14. Program also aims to improve youth’s social skills, emotional development, and academic performance. Lessons covered communication, healthy coping behaviors, problem-solving, discipline, and limit-setting. Participants included fathers who had been released from prison or jail in the last 24 months, a focal child between ages 10 and 14, and another caregiver of the child. Programming was delivered in a community setting. Participants attended two-hour sessions once per week for seven weeks. Group-based program aimed at promoting positive relationships, behaviors, and skills among families with children ages 10–14. Program also aims to improve youth’s social skills, emotional development, and academic performance. Lessons covered communication, healthy coping behaviors, problem-solving, discipline, and limit-setting. Participants included fathers who had been released from prison or jail in the last 24 months, a focal child between ages 10 and 14, and another caregiver of the child. Programming was delivered in a community setting. Participants attended two-hour sessions once per week for seven weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCT Follow-up survey(s): Program exit and six months after the program Sample size: 80 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship quality with child: Closeness to child, warmth of father–child relationship (child reported) Contact with child: Living with child, contact with child, shared activities with child (father and child reported) Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Parental stress (for example, “During the past month, how often have you felt angry with your child?”) Financial support of child: Child support order, paid child support, in-kind support Economic stability: Employment status Personal well-being: Depression Relationship quality with coparent: Cooperation with coparent Child well-being: Behavior problems and self-regulation (father and child reported), academic competence, risky behaviors, social competence, internalizing problems (child reported)
<p>Creating Lasting Family Connections Fatherhood Program (Shamblen et al. 2017)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at enhancing fathers’ relationships with family members to protect against substance use and recidivism. Program used a cognitive-behavioral treatment approach to address supporting substance use recovery, strengthening family relationships, and communication skills. Participants included fathers who had recently been in prison, had minor children, had been diagnosed with substance dependency, and who participated in substance use recovery while in prison. Programming was delivered in a community setting. Fathers attended two-hour sessions once per week for 18 weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCT Follow-up survey(s): Program exit and three months after the program Sample size: 280 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal well-being: Recidivism Relationship quality with coparent: Relationship skills (for example, “If I think there is a problem developing in a relationship, I let the other person know what I think and how I feel.”)

Table A.3. Impact studies of programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers

Intervention or evaluation name (citation)	Program description	Study design	Outcome measures ^a
<p>Long-Distance Dads (Skarupski 2005)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at enabling incarcerated fathers to maintain positive contact with their children while incarcerated and to be better fathers upon release. Lessons covered qualities of a good father, dealing with anger, child development, parenting from prison, dealing with frustration and discouragement, and ensuring a productive reentry experience. Participants included incarcerated fathers. Programming was delivered in prison. Fathers attended sessions once per week for 12 weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QED Follow-up survey(s): Program exit and nine months after program completion Sample size: 144 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with child: Frequency of letter-writing, frequency of contact with child, involvement with child Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Parenting awareness, consistency, and nurturing
<p>InsideOut Dad (Smith 2008)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at improving fathers' attitudes and beliefs about parenting to ultimately enhance father-child relationships. Lessons focused on reducing antisocial attitudes, creating lasting family relationships, improving empathy and impulse control, discipline, and child development. Participants included incarcerated fathers. Programming was delivered in prison. Fathers attended 12, one-hour sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QED Follow-up survey(s): Program exit Sample size: 102 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship quality with child: Relationship quality with children, frequency of telling child "I love you" Contact with child: Frequency of calls, writing, and visits with children Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Happiness with fathering, knowledge of fathering, attitudes about fathering, knowledge of who child spends times with Relationship quality with coparent: Relationship quality with mother(s) of children
<p>Parenting course based on The Role of a Father Curriculum (Smith and Morote 2011)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group-based program aimed at improving parenting skills of incarcerated fathers. Lessons covered discipline, communication, financial literacy, respect, and the effects of incarceration. Participants included incarcerated fathers. Programming was delivered in prison over the course of five weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QED Follow-up survey(s): Program exit Sample size: 60 fathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with child: Parent-child interactions Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge: Discipline Economic stability: Financial literacy

Note: The sample sizes refer to the total number of participants in the study (both in the program and the comparison groups).

^a Outcome measures were reported by fathers unless otherwise noted.

QED = quasi-experimental design; RCT = randomized controlled trial.

Table A.5. Evidence and gaps map (table view – study counts)

Study Impact Key		Program Features													All Studies	
		Setting			Child participation		Coparent participation		Type of services		Length of services		Additional topics covered			
		Prison or jail	Community	Both	Yes	No	Yes	No	Group sessions only	Group and individual sessions	10 weeks or longer	Less than 10 weeks	Healthy relationships	Economic stability		Personal wellbeing
Outcome Domains	Relationship quality with child	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 3 ⊖ 0
	Contact with child	● 4 ○ 2 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 4 ○ 2 ⊖ 2	● 2 ○ 1 ⊖ 1	● 3 ○ 2 ⊖ 1	● 4 ○ 3 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 1	● 2 ○ 1 ⊖ 2	● 3 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 4 ○ 3 ⊖ 2	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 1	● 5 ○ 3 ⊖ 2	● 5 ○ 3 ⊖ 2
	Parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge	● 5 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 4 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 5 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 5 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 3 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 3 ○ 4 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 3 ○ 4 ⊖ 0	● 5 ○ 4 ⊖ 0
	Financial support of child	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 1
	Economic stability	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0
	Personal wellbeing	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 3 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 4 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 4 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 4 ⊖ 0
	Relationship quality with coparent	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 3 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 3 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 1	● 2 ○ 3 ⊖ 1	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 2 ○ 4 ⊖ 1	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 1	● 2 ○ 4 ⊖ 1	● 2 ○ 4 ⊖ 1
	Child wellbeing	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 1 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 0 ⊖ 0	● 0 ○ 2 ⊖ 0	● 1 ○ 2 ⊖ 0
Number of Studies*		7	2	1	2	8	3	7	8	2	5	4	8	1	9	10

*One study (Smith 2008) did not specify the length of the program.